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HOW TO CREATE A FACEBOOK CONTENT PLAN



Irish Life



What should you post?

How frequently should you post?

How can you reach more people with the content you post?

THE FACEBOOK NEWS FEED ALGORITHM

The Facebook news feed algorithm determines the number of people you will reach with each post you share on Facebook.

Reach refers to the number of individual people who saw your post in their Facebook feed. They could have scrolled straight past or stopped and had a good look.

A screenshot of a Facebook post. At the top, the user's name is "Amanda Webb - Spiderworking" with a small profile picture. Below the name, it says "Published by Amanda Webb [?] · February 27 at 10:51am · 🌐". The post text is "Sad but true 😊". The main image is a graphic with an orange background. It contains the quote *"Nothing makes a person more productive than the last minute"* in white text. Below the quote is a yellow alarm clock. At the bottom left of the graphic is the "spiderworking.com" logo. Below the image, there is a red box containing the text "412 people reached". A red arrow points from this box to the right. To the right of the box is a blue button that says "Boost Post".

You will see how many people you reach underneath each post.

Your Facebook news feed is where you see updates from your friends, the pages you like, the groups you subscribe to and ads.

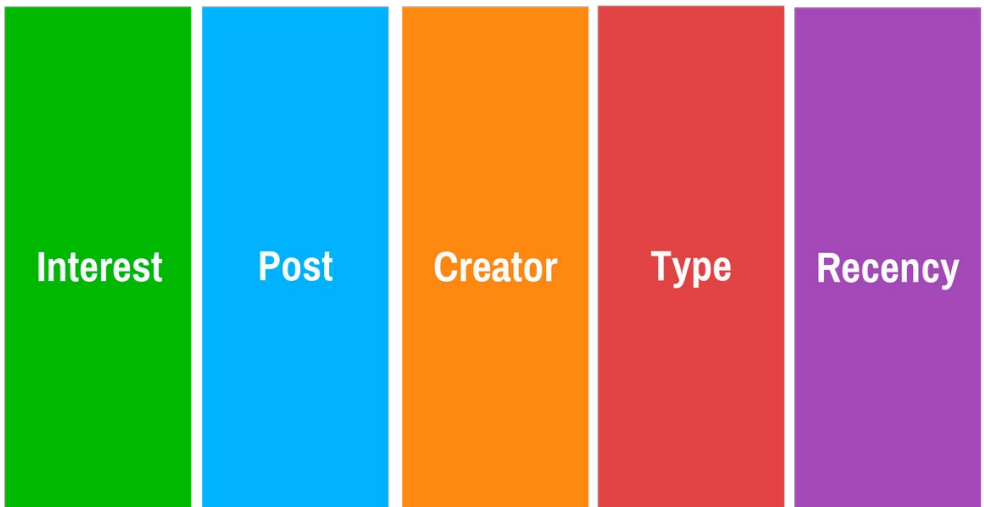
If you spent time building your Facebook audience it might surprise you to know that when you post content to your Facebook page it doesn't always reach those people. In fact, when you post to your page that post could end up in the news feeds of as little as 1% of your audience.

This is due to an algorithm that Facebook implemented to ensure that Facebook users would see the content that was most valuable to them at the top of their feeds.

Each time you post to your Facebook page the algorithm will assess it using 1000s of factors. We don't know exactly what these factors are but we know the basics. Facebook also releases regular News Feed algorithm updates making it harder for us to trick the system.



Here are the basics:



INTEREST

This refers to how interested the Facebook user is in you, as the creator of content.

If you are a Facebook user you will notice that if there is a friend you interact with a lot you will see their content more frequently at the top of your feed when you log in.

There will be other friends that you rarely see content from but if you visit their profile you'll see that they post frequently. Facebook doesn't show you their content as you haven't shown an interest in what they post in the past.

Occasionally Facebook throws in a wild card and shows you posts from people you haven't seen content from in a while. If you react favourably to it they will continue to show you posts from these friends in your feed.

The algorithm works in a similar way for pages. Although Facebook places less prominence on content from pages in general, if people visit our page and interact with our content on a regular basis they are more likely to see our posts in their feeds.

POST

When you post a piece of content on Facebook they will show it to a small portion of your audience. If it proves popular and gets lots of clicks, likes, reactions, comments or shares they will continue to roll it out to other users.

CREATOR

This is similar to interest. The difference is that it refers to the performance of all of your posts amongst users.

Do posts from your page get good traction on a regular basis? Do a large portion of your audience frequently click, like, react, comment or share your content?

If your posts are consistently getting a good reaction you have a better chance of reaching more people.

TYPE

This refers to the type of post you create. Is it a text update? A link? A photo? A video? A live video?

There are two factors that contribute to the type of content you post:

1. Facebook prefers some types of content

Facebook changes the weight of different types of content from time to time. For many years images would automatically get more reach, these were replaced by videos and then live video.

Although you will see extra reach on specific types of content it's a mistake to rely on that one type of post. Facebook can change the weight of a content type at a moments notice. You also need to consider the user.

2. Your user has a preferred content type

Although Facebook chooses to give weight to different types of post each individual user has a preference that will affect the reach.

Some users don't enjoy watching video but prefer clicking links. Others prefer looking at images. As a result they will see more of their preferred type of content in their Facebook news feed.

To reach the largest possible audience we need to ensure that we are posting a variety of content.

RECENCY

This refers to how recently you posted the content in comparison to when your audience sees it. Most Facebook posts have a lifespan of a day, after that your reach will tail off. Some posts will last longer, particularly when they get a lot of Likes, comments and shares.



OTHER IMPORTANT FACTORS

WORDS

Facebook conducted a survey of users and discovered that they felt there was too much promotional posts in their feeds. In order to combat this they have restricted the organic reach on posts that contain specific words.

These words change on a regular basis but we know words like 'book' 'buy' 'competition' 'contest' 'tag' and anything including a price can restrict reach.

If you want to promote specific products or services on Facebook you will need to 'boost' the post or create advertisements in ads manager.

BE SHAREABLE

In July 2016 Facebook made a dramatic change to its algorithm that affected a lot of businesses. The update meant that our post reach would decline unless people shared our content on a regular basis.

This puts the pressure on businesses to share good quality content that their audiences will be inclined to share. To top it off Facebook doesn't want us using the word 'Share' in the text of our posts and will limit the reach if we do.



CREATING A SIMPLE CONTENT PLAN

Now you understand the algorithm it's time to put together a weekly content schedule. When you have this in place it makes it easier to ensure you are doing everything you can to reach your audience.

You'll find a content schedule template at the end of this book. Here's how to complete it:

The left-hand side of the schedule is information you'll require before you post. The right-hand side, highlighted in blue is for measuring results

Time	Content type	Facebook post description	Link (if required)	Image/Video (if required)	Reach	Likes / Reactions	Comments	Shares	Link Clicks	Negative Feedback
MONDAY										
TUESDAY										
WEDNESDAY										
THURSDAY										
FRIDAY										
SATURDAY										
SUNDAY										

I recommend posting between 1 and 3 times a day every weekday and at least once a day on weekend days. This will be enough activity to help you reach a good portion of your audience.

For each day of the week chose how many times you want to post.

Time:	Add specific times that you want to post to the 'Time' column
Content type:	Will you be posting a link? A photo? A video? A plain text update?
Facebook post description:	What sort of thing will you post that day. Will it be local news? A quote related to your business? An introduction to a member of your staff? By scheduling the same sort of content every week you'll find it easier to maintain your posting schedule.
Link:	Are you sharing a link with your post? If so add it here
Image/Video:	Are you sharing an image or video with your post? If so add the filename here


Set aside 1/2 an hour each week to measure the impact of your posts.

To find the statistics you need click on the reach number at the bottom of your post:



Post Details


Reported stats may be delayed from what appears on posts



Amanda Webb - Spiderworking

Published by Amanda Webb (?) · February 27 at 10:51am ·

Sad but true 😊



418 People Reached

12 Reactions, Comments & Shares

5 Like	4 On Post	1 On Shares
1 🤔 Haha	0 On Post	1 On Shares
5 Comments	5 On Post	0 On Shares
1 Shares	1 On Post	0 On Shares
10 Post Clicks		
2 Photo Views	0 Link Clicks	8 Other Clicks

NEGATIVE FEEDBACK

0 Hide Post

0 Hide All Posts

0 Report as Spam

0 Unlike Page

You can also find this information in the 'Insights' tab on your Facebook page.

Taking 1/2 an hour a week to complete this schedule and measure the results will help you understand what is working best for you and your audience.

A decorative header featuring a teal background with various white and light teal icons. These icons include speech bubbles, a person silhouette, a smiley face, a music note, a gear, a heart, a plus sign, a thumbs up, a cloud, a mail envelope, and a Twitter bird. The icons are arranged in a pattern that suggests a network or a flow of information.

CONTENT IDEAS

We have discussed the algorithm and we know that we need to be producing content that will motivate our audience to interact with it. Whether that is liking, commenting, sharing, clicking on the post or a link on the post.



WHAT SORT OF CONTENT SHOULD CAN WE POST THAT HAS THIS RESULT?

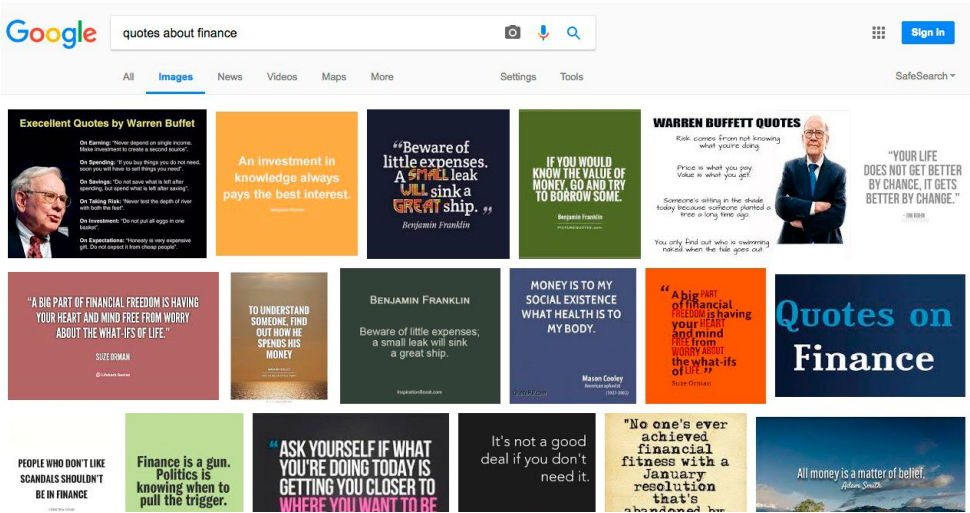
1. Content that provokes emotion

If we can make people feel, we are making a strong connection with them. Creating memes, visual content that resonates with our audience is the easiest way to do this.

Quotes make for highly shareable content. Find quotations that have a relation to your business and tap into emotion and pair them with an attractive image.

The easiest way to find quotes to share is to search Google for 'quotes about [insert keyword]' and then select the images tab.

Below you can see the results I got for searching 'Quotes about finance'



Don't be tempted to download those photographs and use them as your own. The creator of those images owns the copyright. Instead look for quotes that make you smile, amuse you or hit a nerve and write them down.

Now you can create your own images using the quotes you have collected.

Canva (www.canva.com) is a free easy tool that helps you quickly create images for use on social media. It also has stock images that you can use in your designs for just \$1 per image.

Here's an example of a quote memes created in Canva:



2. The people behind your business

Customers will relate to pictures of you and your staff much better than branded business content. Consider featuring staff members once a week, on their birthday's and other celebrations.

The more your customers see of you online the more they will feel comfortable with your business. They'll also be more inclined to click the like button when they see a smiling face rather than an office frontage or flyer.

3. Facebook Live

It's now possible to live stream to Facebook from your phone and your desktop computer. This is taking 'showing the people behind your business' up a level.

Going live gives you the opportunity to connect directly with your customers. They can ask questions in the comments section and you can answer.

You can use Facebook Live to interview local celebrities, members of your team, do a Q&A or to share the latest financial news.

Facebook Live works particularly well in a local business. People will recognise the person they see on screen and will want to share it with their friends and family.

It also gives you the opportunity to share your knowledge with your customers making them recognise you as a trusted source of advice.

4. Be conversational in tone

We were all trained in school to write in a certain manner. This style of writing is great for essays and assignments but it doesn't work on social media.

When you write text to accompany your posts on Facebook imagine you are sitting down and telling a friend about what you are going to post. This conversational tone works much better. People will feel like they are connecting with you rather than just reading something cold.

5. Provoke conversation

Once you have built a strong audience on your page you can start asking questions. Keep it simple so that people can comment straight away without thinking.

Questions like:

"Have you planned your holiday's yet?"

"How do you save money? Is it a jar of rainy day money or do you have an account for everything?"

Can work well.

5. Post a variety of content types

Remember that although some types of content will perform better than others you should post a variety of links, videos, photographs and text updates during the week. This will ensure you reach the widest possible audience.

6. Share posts from other Facebook pages

Facebook seems to like it when you share good content from other Facebook creators. if you find a good post from a local business or a company that shares your target market click the share button to share it with your audience.

7. Local news

Sharing your own photos of your town or businesses in your town will help you get noticed by local people. There's nothing like seeing a photo of your local high street, river or landmark to grab your attention.

Always be on the lookout for good photo opportunities. Perhaps there's a lovely sunrise or sunset, maybe there's an event happening. Be ready with your phone to capture and share those moments.

8. Timing

Consider your customers, not just what time they are online but what they are doing when they are online.

For example, a commuter:

Early morning: They'll have time whilst on public transport to consume longer content. They are more likely to click your links and read.

They will also be reading on their mobile devices and relying on their mobile internet so video will be less popular with them during this part of the day.

Working hours: Many office workers don't have access to Facebook on their work computer but will still look at it on their phones during break times. They won't have time to read in-depth content but will enjoy image based content during this time.

Evening: Our commuters are now home on their tablet using their home WIFI. This the best time to reach them with video content.

If you map out the day of your customers it will give you a better idea of what you should post at what time of day.



WHAT'S NEXT?

Complete your content calendar, schedule your content and start monitoring what is working and what isn't.



Irish Life

Irish Life Assurance plc is regulated
by the Central Bank of Ireland.

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